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and we believe him. And yet, as always follows a published statement, there are some who accept the charge unquestioningly. In this case a few go so far as to call for the removal of the Commissioner, calling his conduct "impertinent, untimely, and ill-judged." Being critical in matters of learning and good taste, and with one agreement that savors of a common origin, they resolve "that the cause of education and the welfare of the country generally would be promoted by the removal of said Claxton and the appointment in his stead of a man of real learning, judgment and good taste." The injustice of this opposition lies in the fact that the Commissioner has expressed no views relative to the teaching of German in the public schools, except, we feel sure, as he in his official capacity has been asked. In all of his replies he has, we have no doubt, spoken with the advice and consent of his superior officer, of the Director of the Council of National Defense—indeed, it may be said, of the Administration. His views, substantially the same as those set forth in this editorial, represent, we believe, the collective judgment of the staff of the Bureau of Education and all dispassionate lovers of America bent upon utilizing to the utmost every available agency for winning and ending the war. Our Secretary of State, speaking in Auburn, N. Y., October 10, felt called upon to say:

"I believe that we must also assume another premise in striving to solve the problems which lie before us. It is that the temper of the peoples who have been engaged in this internecine struggle will, for some time after the war and certainly immediately after it, be impressed with hostility and hatred for one another. The result of this mental attitude will make more difficult the establishment of a true equilibrium between nations, for it will produce an intemperate bias which will impair judgment and cause vindictiveness toward former enemies unless influential and sober-minded men resist this natural feeling and preserve their minds open and free, so that they will impartially weigh the truth and not impute guilt to the misguided or the ignorant. I know that this is a difficult thing to do, because it is humanly difficult to dissociate the instrument of evil from the one who conceives the evil and directs the instrument. But, none the less, sound common sense imposes upon us the duty of correcting, in so far as we are able, this tendency, which will, if it continues, weaken materially the true spirit of justice which is essential to enduring peace.

"You who are present tonight, believing in the brotherhood of man and trained in those precepts which have given the standard of right to this age, know, as I know, that the American people ought not, after the war is won, to cherish a pitiless hate for all those who have served the military dictators of Central Europe. We should discriminate between the ignorant and the intelligent, between the responsible and the irresponsible, between the master and the serf. It seems to me that it is the plain duty of all those who can influence pub-

lic opinion in this country to so guide American thought that passion will not prevent the putting into operation of a wise plan for the readjustment of the world when peace is restored."

We accept these timely and eloquent words as the expression of our own feeling in all their fullness and simplicity.

THE STEPS TO PEACE

MUCH is written today and has been written during the last month bearing directly upon the most important event of the world's future, the settlement of the war. This writing constitutes a mass of material in which it would require the assurance of omniscience to pick and choose, saying, "This is of first importance" and "That is secondary;" "This is wholly ephemeral and will be forgotten" and "That is an integral part of the permanent structure of peace." One fact, however, can be stated definitely and some discrimination based upon it. This is that all the writing of these days is of one or the other of two distinct sorts: it is either of the nature of official documents or it is of the nature of comment upon such official documents.

It is well within the right of ADVOCATE OF PEACE at this time, limited only by the amount of space allowed us by the Pulp and Paper Division of the War Industries Board, to add indefinitely to the mass of personal opinion being formulated upon the exchange of diplomatic correspondence between the Central Powers and President Wilson. But it is also well within our right to withhold comment. It may not be possible for any of us, either reader or editor, to determine the relative value of what is written today, when events move so swiftly and all the world seems in flux; but we can be sure of one thing, namely, that of the two sorts of writings set before us, what is most permanent and most worthy of our earnest study lies rather in the class of the brief self-explanatory official utterances than in the class of personal and of necessity hastily formed opinions about them. There is a situation conceivable in which it is cowardly to withhold a definite opinion. Occasionally, however, it is both wise and charitable to let events take their course, and to reserve unnecessary expression of views upon this half-determined direction. We conceive this to be the type of the present situation. So far as words can go, the protestation of Germany of October 21 might well have marked a definite step forward towards a righteous and durable peace. But the howl of derision with which it was popularly received, as well as the world's former unfortunate experience with German statements professing utter sincerity, make any such conclusion extremely hazardous.

We therefore stand this month upon our unalienable right to say little further than this, to urge with all the force at our command that now of all times in our history is the time for a united American front.

We present below the official documents of the month and recommend to our readers an intimate study of them in order that future utterances of this sort may be interpreted in their light. Not our side alone, but both sides ought to be known and appreciated by all of us, if we are to be prepared for peace when it shall come. The attitude of the American Peace Society, so far as it can be adequately expressed in this magazine, has been and is that the supreme world need is now that Germany shall surrender her unfortunate past to the better future, and that she shall make a new intelligence the basis of a new feeling and a new action. Through an intellectual surrender she must somehow be led to purpose an internal reorganization out of the materials of this war experience to the end that she may help the rest of us to set up a happier and worthier order in the form of a co-operating society of nations.

The list of documents which form the only possible steps to peace at present visible begins with a note under the date of October 6, to which as prolog may well be placed the proclamation of the same date, issued by Emperor William to the German Army and Navy. This reads:

"For months past the enemy, with enormous exertions and almost without pause in the fighting, has stormed against your lines. In weeks of the struggle, often without repose, you have had to persevere and resist a numerically far superior enemy. Therein lies the greatness of the task which has been set for you and which you are fulfilling. Troops of all the German states are doing their part and are heroically defending the Fatherland on foreign soil. Hard is the task.

"My navy is holding its own against the united enemy naval forces and is unwaveringly supporting the army in its difficult struggle.

"The eyes of those at home rest with pride and admiration on the deeds of the army and the navy. I express to you the thanks of myself and the Fatherland.

"The collapse of the Macedonian front has occurred in the midst of the hardest struggle. In accord with our allies, I have resolved once more to offer peace to the enemy, but I will only extend my hand for an honorable peace. We owe that to the heroes who have laid down their lives for the Fatherland, and we make that our duty to our children.

"Whether arms will be lowered still is a question. Until then we must not slacken. We must, as hitherto, exert all our strength unwearily to hold our ground against the onslaught of our enemies. The hour is grave, but, trusting in your strength and in God's gracious help, we feel ourselves to be strong enough to defend our beloved Fatherland.

WILHELM."

The "Note" to which we have referred was forwarded October 6 by the Imperial Chancellor, Prince Maximilian, to President Wilson, through the official channels of the Swiss Government. It reads:

"The German Government requests the President of the United States to take in hand the restoration of peace, acquaint all the belligerent States of this request, and invite them to send plenipotentiaries for the purpose of opening negotiations.

"It accepts the programme set forth by the President of the United States in his message to Congress on January 8, and in his later pronouncements, especially his speech of September 27, as a basis for peace negotiations.

"With a view to avoiding further bloodshed, the German Government requests the immediate conclusion of an armistice on land and water and in the air."

Two days later, October 8, Secretary of State Lansing handed this Government's reply to Germany to M. Frederick Oederlin, Chargé d'Affaires of Switzerland, *ad interim*, which reads:

"SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge, on behalf of the President, your note of October 6th, inclosing a communication from the German Government to the President; and I am instructed by the President to request you to make the following communication to the Imperial German Chancellor:

"Before making reply to the request of the Imperial German Government, and in order that that reply shall be as candid and straightforward as the momentous interests involved require, the President of the United States deems it necessary to assure himself of the exact meaning of the note of the Imperial Chancellor. Does the Imperial Chancellor mean that the Imperial German Government accepts the terms laid down by the President in his address to the Congress of the United States on the 8th of January last and in subsequent addresses and that its object in entering into discussions would be only to agree upon the practical details of their application?

"The President feels bound to say with regard to the suggestion of an armistice that he would not feel at liberty to propose a cessation of arms to the governments with which the Government of the United States is associated against the Central Powers so long as the armies of those powers are upon their soil. The good faith of any discussion would manifestly depend upon the consent of the Central Powers immediately to withdraw their forces everywhere from invaded territory.

"The President also feels that he is justified in asking whether the Imperial Chancellor is speaking merely for the constituted authorities of the empire who have so far conducted the war. He deems the answers to these questions vital from every point of view."

To this virtual interpellation of inquiry the German Government replied four days later. This reply was peculiarly characterized by the fact that, sent out from

the great wireless station at Nauen, it was first picked up in France and forwarded to the United States two days before the official copy was handed to the President by the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires. It follows:

BERLIN, Oct. 12, 1918.

"In reply to the questions of the President of the United States of America, the German Government hereby declares:

"The German Government has accepted the terms laid down by President Wilson in his address of January 8 and in his subsequent addresses on the foundation of a permanent peace of justice. Consequently its object in entering into discussion would be only to agree upon practical details of the application of these terms. The German Government believes that the government of the powers associated with the Government of the United States also take the position taken by President Wilson in his address.

"The German Government, in accordance with the Austro-Hungarian Government, for the purpose of bringing about an armistice, declares itself ready to comply with the proposition of the President in regard to evacuation. The German Government suggests that the President may occasion the meeting of a mixed commission for making the necessary arrangements concerning the evacuation.

"The present German Government, which has undertaken the responsibility for this step toward peace, has been formed by conferences and in agreement with the great majority of the Reichstag. The Chancellor, supported in all his actions by the will of this majority, speaks in the name of the German Government and of the German people.

(Signed)

"SOLF,

"State Secretary of Foreign Office."

President Wilson's reply, constituting the first definite reply to the note of October 6 as well as an acknowledgment of the communication immediately preceding, is dated October 14, 1918, from the Department of State, Washington, and reads:

"SIR: In reply to the communication of the German Government, dated the 12th inst., which you handed me today, I have the honor to request you to transmit the following answer:

"The unqualified acceptance by the present German Government and by a large majority of the German Reichstag of the terms laid down by the President of the United States of America in his address to the Congress of the United States on the 8th of January, 1918, and in his subsequent addresses justifies the President in making a frank and direct statement of his decision with regard to the communications of the German Government of the 8th and 12th of October, 1918.

"It must be clearly understood that the process of evacuation and the conditions of an armistice are matters which must be left to the judgment and advice of the military advisers of the Government of the United

States and the Allied Governments, and the President feels it his duty to say that no arrangement can be accepted by the Government of the United States which does not provide absolutely satisfactory safeguards and guarantees of the maintenance of the present military supremacy of the armies of the United States and of the Allies in the field. He feels confident that he can safely assume that this will also be the judgment and decision of the Allied Governments.

"The President feels that it is also his duty to add that neither the Government of the United States, nor, he is quite sure, the governments with which the Government of the United States is associated as a belligerent will consent to consider an armistice so long as the armed forces of Germany continue the illegal and inhumane practices which they persist in.

"At the very time that the German Government approaches the Government of the United States with proposals of peace, its submarines are engaged in sinking passenger ships at sea, and not the ships alone, but the very boats in which their passengers and crews seek to make their way to safety; and in their present enforced withdrawal from Flanders and France the German armies are pursuing a course of wanton destruction which has always been regarded as in direct violation of the rules and practices of civilized warfare. Cities and villages, if not destroyed, are being stripped of all they contain not only, but often of their very inhabitants. The nations associated against Germany cannot be expected to agree to a cessation of arms while acts of inhumanity, spoliation, and desolation are being continued which they justly look upon with horror and with burning hearts.

"It is necessary also, in order that there may be no possibility of misunderstanding, that the President should very solemnly call the attention of the Government of Germany to the language and plain intent of one of the terms of peace which the German Government has now accepted. It is contained in the address of the President delivered at Mount Vernon on the Fourth of July last. It is as follows:

The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at least its reduction to virtual impotency.

"The power which has hitherto controlled the German nation is of the sort here described. It is within the choice of the German nation to alter it. The President's words, just quoted, naturally constitute a condition precedent to peace, if peace is to come by the action of the German people themselves. The President feels bound to say that the whole process of peace will, in his judgment, depend upon the definiteness and the satisfactory character of the guarantees which can be given in this fundamental matter. It is indispensable that the governments associated against Germany should know beyond a peradventure with whom they are dealing.

The President will make a separate reply to the Royal and Imperial Government of Austria-Hungary.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my high consideration.

(Signed)

ROBERT LANSING.

Mr. Frederick Oederlin, Chargé d'Affaires of Switzerland, ad interim in charge of German interests in the United States."

On the same day that the above note was dispatched, the Spanish Ambassador handed to the Secretary of State the following petition of the Imperial Ottoman Government:

EMBAJADA DE ESPANA,
WASHINGTON, October 14, 1918.

"MR. PRESIDENT: I have the honor to transmit herewith, acting upon instructions from my government, the text of a communication received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain from the Chargé d'Affaires of Turkey in Madrid on October 12, and which reached me late yesterday, Sunday evening.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

JUAN RIANO.

The Honorable WOODROW WILSON,
President of the United States.

[Inclosure.]

"The undersigned, Chargé d'Affaires of Turkey, has the honor, acting upon instructions from his government, to request the Royal Government to inform the Secretary of State of the United States of America by telegraph that the Imperial Government requests the President of the United States of America to take upon himself the task of the reestablishment of peace; to notify all belligerent States of this demand and to invite them to delegate plenipotentiaries to initiate negotiations. It (the Imperial Government) accepts as a basis for the negotiations the program laid down by the President of the United States in his message to Congress of January 8, 1918, and in his subsequent declarations, especially the speech of September 27.

"In order to put an end to the shedding of blood, the Imperial Ottoman Government requests that steps be taken for the immediate conclusion of a general armistice on land, on sea, and in the air."

While Germany was formulating her response to President Wilson's note of October 14, and various and conflicting sounds of political upheaval behind the Teuton scenes were all that might be known of the next step in negotiations, the State Department at Washington made public the following exchange of notes between Austria-Hungary and this country:

LEGATION OF SWEDEN,
WASHINGTON, D. C., October 7, 1918.

(Translation.)

"Excellency: By order of my Government I have the honor confidentially to transmit herewith to you the following communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary to the President of the United States of America:

"The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which has waged war always and solely as a defensive war, and repeatedly given documentary evidence of its readiness to stop the shedding of blood and to arrive at a just and honorable peace, hereby addresses itself to his Lordship, the President of the United States of America, and offers to conclude with him and his allies an armistice on every front on land, at sea, and in the air, and to enter immediately upon negotiations for a peace for which the fourteen points in the message of President Wilson to Congress of January 8, 1918, and the four points contained in President Wilson's address of February 12, 1918, should serve as a foundation, and in which the viewpoints declared by President Wilson in his address of September 27, 1918, will also be taken into account.

Be pleased to accept, etc.,

W. A. F. EKENGREN.

His Excellency, Mr. Robert Lansing, Secretary of State of the United States, Washington."

The reply of the United States is dated October 18 and is addressed to the Swedish Minister:

"Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the seventh instant, in which you transmit a communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary to the President. I am now instructed by the President to request you to be good enough through your Government to convey to the Imperial and Royal Government the following reply:

"The President deems it his duty to say to the Austro-Hungarian Government that he cannot entertain the present suggestions of that Government because of certain events of utmost importance, which, occurring since the delivery of his address of the eighth of January last, have necessarily altered the attitude and responsibility of the Government of the United States.

"Among the fourteen terms of peace which the President formulated at that time occurred the following:

(X). The peoples of Austro-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

"Since that sentence was written and uttered to the Congress of the United States, the Government of the United States has recognized that a state of belligerency exists between the Czecho-Slovaks and the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, and that the Czecho-Slovak National Council is a *de facto* belligerent Government, clothed with proper authority to direct the military and political affairs of the Czecho-Slovaks. It has also recognized in the fullest manner the justice of the nationalistic aspirations of the Jugo-Slavs for freedom.

"The President is therefore no longer at liberty to accept the mere "autonomy" of these peoples as a basis of peace, but is obliged to insist that they and not he shall be the judges of what action on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government will satisfy their aspirations and their conception of their rights and destiny as members of the family of nations.

"Accept, sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration."

"ROBERT LANSING."

The German note of October 20, as in the case of the German note preceding, was sent out from the wireless station at Nauen two days before the official copy was received in this country by the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. The official copy did not differ materially from the wirelessly copy. An insignificant but amusing alteration is that, where the unofficial note declared that "for the covering of a retreat destructions will always be necessary and they are carried out in so far as is permitted by international law," the official copy reads ". . . be necessary and are in so far permitted by international law." This communication, as made public by Secretary Lansing on October 23, is as follows:

LEGATION OF SWITZERLAND,
WASHINGTON, October 22, 1918.

"Department of German Interests."

SIR: *By direction of my Government, I have the honor to transmit herewith to Your Excellency the original German text of a communication dated October 20, 1918, from the German Government, which has today been received from the Swiss Foreign Office. I beg also to inclose an English translation of the communication in question as transmitted to the Swiss Foreign Office by the German Government with the request that it be forwarded to Your Excellency's Government.*

Please accept, sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed)

F. OEDERLIN,

Chargé d'Affaires a. i. of Switzerland.

"His Excellency ROBERT LANSING, Secretary of State, Washington."

[Inclosure in English.]

"In accepting the proposal for an evacuation of the occupied territories the German Government has started from the assumption that the procedure of this evacuation and of the conditions of an armistice should be left to the judgment of the military advisers, and that the actual standard of power on both sides in the field has to form the basis for arrangements safeguarding and guaranteeing this standard. The German Government suggests to the President to bring about an opportunity for fixing the details. It trusts that the President of the United States will approve of no demand which would be irreconcilable with the honor of the German people and with opening a way to a peace of justice.

"The German Government protests against the reproach of illegal and inhumane actions made against the German land and sea forces and thereby against the German people. For the covering of a retreat, destructions will always be necessary and are in so far permitted by international law. The German troops are under the strictest instructions to spare private property and to exercise care for the population to the best of their

ability. Where transgressions occur in spite of these instructions the guilty are being punished.

"The German Government further denies that the German navy in sinking ships has ever purposely destroyed lifeboats with their passengers. The German Government proposes with regard to all these charges that the facts be cleared up by neutral commissions. In order to avoid anything that might hamper the work of peace, the German Government has caused orders to be despatched to all submarine commanders precluding the torpedoing of passenger ships, without, however, for technical reasons, being able to guarantee that these orders will reach every single submarine at sea before its return.

"As the fundamental conditions for peace, the President characterizes the destruction of every arbitrary power that can separately, secretly and of its own single choice disturb the peace of the world. To this the German Government replies: Hitherto the representation of the people in the German Empire has not been endowed with an influence on the formation of the government. The Constitution did not provide for a concurrence of the representation of the people in decisions on peace and war. These conditions have just now undergone a fundamental change. The new government has been formed in complete accord with the wishes of the representation of the people, based on the equal, universal, secret, direct franchise. The leaders of the great parties of the Reichstag are members of this government. In future no government can take or continue in office without possessing the confidence of the majority of the Reichstag. The responsibility of the Chancellor of the Empire to the representation of the people is being legally developed and safeguarded. The first act of the new government has been to lay before the Reichstag a bill to alter the Constitution of the Empire so that the consent of the representation of the people is required for decisions on war and peace. The permanence of the new system is, however, guaranteed not only by constitutional safeguards, but also by the unshakable determination of the German people, whose vast majority stands behind these reforms and demands their energetic continuance.

"The question of the President, with whom he and the governments associated against Germany are dealing, is therefore answered in a clear and unequivocal manner by the statement that the offer of peace and an armistice has come from a government which, free from arbitrary and irresponsible influence, is supported by the approval of the overwhelming majority of the German people.

"SOLE,

"State Secretary of Foreign Affairs."

"BERLIN, October 20, 1918."

The reply of President Wilson, stating that, now that he has received "solemn and explicit assurance" on certain doubtful points in Germany's earlier communications, "he cannot decline" to proceed with the steps urged by Germany in its first note of October 6, is dated from the State Department, October 23, 1918, and reads:

"SIR: *I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 22d, transmitting a communication*

under date of the 20th from the German Government and to advise you that the President has instructed me to reply thereto as follows:

"Having received the solemn and explicit assurance of the German Government that it unreservedly accepts the terms of peace laid down in his address to the Congress of the United States on the 8th of January, 1918, and the principles of settlement enunciated in his subsequent addresses, particularly the address of the 27th of September, and that it desires to discuss the details of their application, and that this wish and purpose emanate, not from those who have hitherto dictated German policy and conducted the present war on Germany's behalf, but from ministers who speak for the majority of the Reichstag and for an overwhelming majority of the German people; and having received also the explicit promise of the present German Government that the humane rules of civilized warfare will be observed both on land and sea by the German armed forces, the President of the United States feels that he cannot decline to take up with the governments with which the Government of the United States is associated the question of an armistice.

"He deems it his duty to say again, however, that the only armistice he would feel justified in submitting for consideration would be one which should leave the United States and the powers associated with her in a position to enforce any arrangements that may be entered into and to make a renewal of hostilities on the part of Germany impossible. The President has, therefore, transmitted his correspondence with the present German authorities to the governments with which the Government of the United States is associated as a belligerent, with the suggestion that, if those governments are disposed to effect peace upon the terms and principles indicated, their military advisers and the military advisers of the United States be asked to submit to the governments associated against Germany the necessary terms of such an armistice as will fully protect the interests of the peoples involved and ensure to the associated governments the unrestricted power to safeguard and enforce the details of the peace to which the German Government has agreed, provided they deem such an armistice possible from the military point of view. Should such terms of armistice be suggested, their acceptance by Germany will afford the best concrete evidence of her unequivocal acceptance of the terms and principles of peace from which the whole nation proceeds.

"The President would deem himself lacking in candor did he not point out in the frankest possible terms the reason why extraordinary safeguards must be demanded. Significant and important as the constitutional changes seem to be which are spoken of by the German Foreign Secretary in his note of the 20th of October, it does not appear that the principle of a government responsible to the German people has yet been fully worked out or that any guarantees either exist or are in contemplation that the alterations of principle and of practice, now partially agreed upon, will be permanent. Moreover, it does not appear that the heart of the present difficulty has been reached. It may be that future wars have been brought under the control of the German people, but the present war has not

been; and it is with the present war that we are dealing. It is evident that the German people have no means of commanding the acquiescence of the military authorities of the empire in the popular will that the power of the King of Prussia to control the policy of the empire is unimpaired; that the determining initiative still remains with those who have hitherto been the masters of Germany.

"Feeling that the whole peace of the world depends now on plain speaking and straightforward action, the President deems it his duty to say, without any attempt to soften what may seem harsh words, that the nations of the world do not and cannot trust the word of those who have hitherto been the masters of German policy, and to point out once more that in concluding peace and attempting to undo the infinite injuries and injustices of this war the Government of the United States cannot deal with any but veritable representatives of the German people who have been assured of a genuine constitutional standing as the real rulers of Germany. If it must deal with the military masters and the monarchical autocrats of Germany now, or if it is likely to have to deal with them later in regard to the international obligations of the German Empire, it must demand, not peace negotiations, but surrender. Nothing can be gained by leaving this essential thing unsaid.

"Accept, sir, the renewed assurances of my high consideration.

"(Signed)

ROBERT LANSING.

"Mr. Frederick Oederlin, Chargé d'Affaires of Switzerland, ad interim in charge of German interests in the United States."

The last Note is from Germany. It was first made public by the Associated Press from Copenhagen under date of October 27. Read in connection with President Wilson's communication to which it is a reply, it is now apparent that the nature and possibilities of an armistice are in the hands of the Supreme War Council at Versailles. Of course, the democratization of Germany cannot be an accomplished fact, there has not been time enough for such a thing to be possible. Furthermore, we have heard nothing about the Bundesrat. Yet our own view is that this Note, which seems to require no reply from the President, contains all that could in dignity be said by the German Government at this time. The Note reads:

"The German Government has taken cognizance of the answer of the President of the United States.

"The President is aware of the far-reaching changes which have been carried out and are being carried out in the German constitutional structure, and that peace negotiations are being conducted by a peoples' government, in whose hands rests, both actually and constitutionally, the power to make the deciding conclusions.

"The military powers are also subject to it.

"The German Government now awaits proposals for an armistice, which shall be the first step toward a just peace, as the President has described it in his proclamation."

"SOLF."

Since these notes were written other and tremendous events have taken place. October 31 an armistice between Turkey and the Allies was signed at Mudros, on the Island of Lemnos, in the Ægean Sea. The Hohenzollerns, Hapsburgs, and Ottoman Turks are witnessing the death throes of their ancient empires and the dream of a Mitteleuropa is at an end. The war-sick world reads the news from Italy, France, Belgium, Serbia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and breathes again the breath of free men unafraid. Nation after nation from out the depths of centuries of patient, persistent struggle are raising their glad hands toward the morning. Tumbling down the darkness crashes the ancient, discredited, despised remains of the world's arch fire-eater and swashbuckler—war.

A FATAL FLAW IN THE LEAGUE-OF-NATIONS SCHEMES

By GUSTAV SPILLER

General Secretary, International Union of Ethical Societies,
London.

THE subject which in Entente circles is most unwearily discussed today, next to the one of satisfactorily ending the war, is certainly that of the desirability of establishing a League of Nations. Some hold that a vital condition of its success is the exclusion of Germany, at least for a number of years, whilst others contend that only the inclusion of Germany—of course a Germany whose autocracy has been superseded by a democracy—can ensure the League's object being realized. Agreement, however, is almost general that one of the preconditions of its soundness is the settlement of the nationalities' question. Among the Entente Powers the conviction is ripening that when peace comes to be seriously discussed, the carefully elaborated plan of a League of Nations must be ready to be deposited on the round table. M. Clemenceau, alone among Entente statesmen, was credited with eyeing suspiciously the idea of leaguings together the nations; but recently he appears to have explained that he had been misunderstood, and that he, too, believed that organized law should prevail internationally.

When we approach the consideration of the positive contents of the schemes proposed by more or less authoritative bodies or persons, they appear, to the present writer, to be dominated by the idea that the cardinal virtue of an acceptable scheme lies in its making no appreciable demands on the States to be invited to form the League. The propounders almost remind one of Shakespeare's *Dogberry*, who held that since he who touches pitch is certain to be defiled, therefore we must turn away from the law breaker in holy horror and with the gentlest of admonitions. Virtually, all the schemes contemplate a Court whose decisions may be ignored, and a Council of Conciliation whose advice may be disregarded with impunity. The only point on which definiteness has been reached, is that hostilities may not be begun until after the judgment or advice has been published, affording thus, it is alleged, an opportunity for

a calming of spirits and a dispassionate reconsideration of the issue. If, however, a constituent State should prove recalcitrant and refuse to wait, "those States that have the power must be ready to use all the force, economic, military, or naval, they possess." (Viscount Grey.)

It is this last aspect—of the perpetuation of militarism by the League of Nations—which concerns us in this article. Over and over again we are assured by distinguished personalities that it is as idle to think of dispensing with force in inter-national affairs as to dream that we could do without it in intra-national affairs. "The sanction that maintains law is the application of force with the support of the great majority of individuals behind it." (Grey.) Therefore, international law, it is argued, must of necessity be safeguarded by the sanction of force. "We cannot abolish war," says Mr. C. A. McCurdy, M. P., "any more than we can abolish murder; but we can treat it in the same way." As Theodore Roosevelt forcibly expresses this attitude: "When peace comes, let us accept any reasonable proposal, whether calling for a League of Nations, or for any other machinery, which we can in good faith act upon, and which really does offer some chance of lessening the number of future wars and of diminishing their area; but let us not forget that any promise that such a League or other machinery will definitely do away with war is either sheer nonsense or rank hypocrisy. Let us rest our strength on our army, which shall consist not of a special caste but of the people themselves—on an army produced by universal obligatory training of all our young men from 19 to 21."

Let us for a moment be "practical," and envisage the existence of such a militarist League *in the light of pre-war experience*. War remaining a possibility, nations will needs be compelled to maintain vast military establishments; and "if there is to be concentrated preparation for more war, the researches of science will be devoted henceforth to discovering methods by which the human race can be destroyed." (Grey.) Furthermore, uncertainty as to what other States are doing or contemplating, will render "intelligence departments" or espionage inevitable; and rumours, of colossal preparations or meditated attacks, well or ill based, will embitter the relations between States and precipitate crisis after crisis. Clearly, militarism as such creates the conditions favorable to war.

We may imagine this gloomy picture somewhat brightened by two reflections. The first is that since there are numerous States in our League, it would be foolhardy for one or two of the States composing it to defy them. Unfortunately, however, we know to our bitter cost that the crushing of the well-devised and conscienceless military machine of one country has already claimed from the world millions of precious lives and tens of thousands of millions in treasure. Are we, then, in our League, after smashing this brutal military machine, to commence preparations for holding in awe and in check a rejuvenated and unregenerate Germany, a task demanding perhaps twenty million soldiers and a mountain of wealth, to make a Croesus stagger? The second reflection, too, is as a golden apple to the hungry and thirsty. It is said that the League will arrange for a reduction in armaments. But reduction can only refer to quantity, whilst the many surprises of the war have